

What is claimed is:

- 1 1. A computer program product including:  
2 means for comparing a URL, title and/or content of an online site viewed by a user  
3 with a first index of keywords relating to a plurality of subject matter categories, to determine  
4 any subject matter categories to which the online site relates;  
5 means for cross-referencing any determined subject matter categories with a second  
6 index of alternative online sites categorised by subject matter, in order to determine any  
7 alternative online sites in the same or similar category; and  
8 means for displaying any determined alternative online sites to the user.
- 9 2. The computer program product of claim 1 wherein the first and second indexes are  
10 contained in a database remote from the computer program product.
- 11 3. The computer program product of claim 1 further including:  
12 means for determining a geographic locality relating to the user; and  
13 means for determining any alternative sites in the same or a proximate geographical  
14 locality to that relating to the user, so that the displaying means displays any of the  
15 determined alternative sites in the same or a similar subject matter category, that are also in  
16 the same or a proximate geographical locality.
- 1 4. The computer program product of claim 2 further including:  
2 means for determining a geographic locality relating to the user; and  
3 means for determining any alternative sites in the same or a proximate geographical  
4 locality to that relating to the user, so that the displaying means displays any of the  
5 determined alternative sites in the same or a similar subject matter category, that are also in  
6 the same or a proximate geographical locality.
- 1 5. A method of comparative advertising in an online environment including the steps of:  
2 analysing an online site viewed by a user to identify subject matter;

3 displaying to the user information relating to alternative online sites with the same or  
4 similar subject matter.

1 6. The method of claim 5 further including the step of determining a geographical  
2 locality relating to the user and only displaying alternative sites in the same or a  
3 proximate geographical locality.

1 7. The method of claim 6 wherein the geographical locality relating to the user is  
2 determined by analysing the user's electronic address and/or the address of the online  
3 site viewed by the user.

1 8. The method of claim 5 wherein the analysis step is performed by analyzing the URL,  
2 title and/or content of the online site.

1 9. The method of claim 5 wherein the information displayed to the user includes  
2 hyperlinks to the alternative online site(s).

1 10. A method of comparative advertising in an online environment including the steps of:  
2 analysing an online site viewed by a user to identify products advertised on the site;  
3 displaying to the user information relating to competing products on alternative online  
4 sites.

1 11. The method of claim 10 wherein the analysis step is performed by analyzing the URL,  
2 title and/or content of the online site.

1 12. The method of claim 9 wherein the information displayed to the user includes  
2 hyperlinks to the alternative online site(s).

1 13. The method of claim 10 wherein the displayed information includes a price of the  
2 competing product(s).

- 1 14. The method of claim 13 further including the steps of:  
2 determining whether the competing product price is less than the price of the  
3 identified product on the online site viewed by the user, and  
4 (i) if less, displaying the competing product price to the user; or  
5 (ii) if not less, ascertaining a best price relating to the competing product and  
6 displaying the best price to the user or a value in-between.
- 1 15. A method of conducting a commercial transaction in an online environment including  
2 the steps of:  
3 extracting a user's personal, credit and/or delivery details from a storage means on the  
4 user's online device; and  
5 sending these details to the merchant automatically when the user initiates a purchase  
6 request.
- 1 16. A message retrieval and/or transmission system usable with any online network  
2 communication device including:  
3 reading means for ascertaining a hostname associated with one or more online  
4 account addresses;  
5 processor means for determining a server address associated with each hostname,  
6 such that the communication means is adapted to perform the following procedures:  
7 (i) determine one or more possible server name addresses; and sequentially  
8 attempt communication with the one or more possible server name addresses  
9 until a communication is established or communication with all possible  
10 server name addresses has been attempted;  
11 (ii) perform an MX Lookup to activate an automated mail host IP response  
12 relating to the hostname and if successful, ascertain the server address;  
13 (iii) scan IP addresses related to the hostname by incrementing and/or  
14 decrementing the hostname address;  
15 such that these procedures are performed sequentially until a server address is  
16 ascertained; and  
17 communication means for communicating with the determined server address to  
18 remotely retrieve information stored at the account address and/or send information thereto.

1 17. A method of remotely retrieving and/or transmitting information from one or more  
2 online account addresses including:

- 3 (a) ascertaining a hostname relating to each online account address;  
4 (b) for each hostname, determining a server address associated therewith by  
5 performing one of the following procedures:  
6 (i) determining one or more possible server name addresses; and  
7 (ii) sequentially attempting communication with the one or more possible  
8 server name addresses until a communication is established or  
9 communication with all possible server name addresses has been  
10 attempted;  
11 (ii) performing an MX Lookup to activate an automated mail host IP  
12 response relating to the hostname and if successful, ascertaining the  
13 server address;  
14 (iii) scanning IP addresses related to the hostname by incrementing and/or  
15 decrementing the hostname address;  
16 (c) repeating step (b) until the server address is ascertained such that no procedure  
17 is repeated for a particular address; and  
18 (d) communicating with the determined server address to remotely retrieve  
19 information stored at the user's account address and/or send information  
20 thereto.

1 18. A computer program product usable with an Internet browser for locating an online  
2 site when non-US ASCII characters are input into the browser, the computer program  
3 product including:

4 monitoring means for intercepting a message relating to a non-compliant term, such  
5 that the non-compliant term includes non-US ASCII characters;

6 processing means for analysing the intercepted message to ascertain a string  
7 identifying the non-compliant term;

8 search means for querying a database of strings relating to non-compliant terms and  
9 associated online sites, to find a match for the string identifying the non-compliant term;

10 if a match is found, directing the user to the matched online site.

- 1 19. The computer program product of claim 18 wherein the database is remote from the  
2 computer program product.
- 1 20. The computer program product of claim 18 wherein the monitoring means monitors  
2 an input address error message field in order to intercept the non-compliant term.
- 1 21. The computer program product of claim 19 wherein the monitoring means monitors  
2 an input address error message field in order to intercept the non-compliant term.
- 1 22. A method of operating an Internet browser in order to locate an online site when non-  
2 US ASCII characters are input into the browser including the step of:  
3 configuring the Internet browser to automatically refer to a reference site when an  
4 error message relating to a non-compliant term is generated, such that a matching process is  
5 performed at the reference site in order to determine an online site corresponding to the non-  
6 compliant term.
- 1 23. The method of claim 22 wherein the determined online site is accessed and displayed  
2 to a user.
- 1 24. A method of transmogrifying at least a portion of content contained on a page of an  
2 originating site to a beneficiary site, including the steps of:  
3 storing the originating site address, start and end point markers and a specific address  
4 point assigned to a particular cell which refers to the content to be transmogrified;  
5 opening the originating site;  
6 assigning the stored address points to the relevant sections of the originating site page;  
7 scanning the page for the specific address point;  
8 scanning the page from the specific address point to locate the start and end points;  
9 copying the content between the start and end points into a file for transferal to the  
10 beneficiary site.

1 25. The method of claim 24 further including the step of processing the content in the file  
2 to insert and/or alter specific HTML tags in accordance with the target appearance of  
3 the beneficiary site.

1 26. The method of claim 25 such that the transmogrification is undertaken periodically to  
2 update the content of the beneficiary site.

1 27. A method of classifying content on a webpage in order to allow transmogrification of  
2 at least a portion of the classified content to a beneficiary site, including the steps of:  
3 generating a sequence list of address points within the webpage;  
4 ascertaining the address points which correspond to the target content to be  
5 transmogrified;  
6 selecting a start and end point for the target content;  
7 selecting a specific address point relating to the target content;  
8 storing the webpage address, the start and end points and the specific address point for  
9 use in periodically transmogrifying the target content to the beneficiary site.

1 28. The method of claim 27 wherein the address points are ascertained by analysing the  
2 structure of the originating site.

1 29. The method of claim 28 wherein the analysis process includes the following steps:  
2 scanning the page for table, table row, table data and for element HTML tags;  
3 when table tags are located, assigning a hierarchical address point based on the  
4 position of the table within the page;  
5 when table row and table data element tags are located, assigning each cell with an  
6 address point; and  
7 when form element tags are located, assigning each form with an address point.

1 30. The method of claim 29 wherein the step of assigning hierarchical table address  
2 points includes the steps of:  
3 assigning each top level table a consecutive number;  
4 scanning each top level table for secondary tables within that table;

5            assigning each secondary table located a unique address point;  
6            repeating the table scanning and address point assigning steps for each additional sub-  
7 table located.

1    31.    The method of claim 30 wherein the unique table address point is based on the top  
2           level table number concatenated with the sequence number of the one or more  
3           additional tables.

4    32.    The method of claim 29 wherein the cell address points are based upon the table  
5           address point in which the cell resides combined with the sequence number of the  
6           table row and data elements.

7    33.    The method of claim 29 wherein the form address points are based on the table  
8           address point in which the form resides combined with the sequence number and the  
9           form element type.